

Illinois Firm Recalls Ground Beef Products Due to Possible *E. coli* O157:H7 Contamination

Recall Release

FSIS-RC-045-2007

CLASS I RECALL

HEALTH RISK:

HIGH

Congressional and Public Affairs

(202) 720-9113

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 13, 2007 - J & B Meats Corporation Inc., a Coal Valley, Ill., establishment, is voluntarily recalling approximately 173,554 pounds of frozen ground beef products because they may be contaminated with *E. coli* O157:H7, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service announced today.

The products subject to recall include: [\[View Labels\]](#)

- 2-pound boxes of "TOPPS PREMIUM 100% PURE SIRLOIN BEEF SIRLOIN STEAK BURGERS, 6 1/3 LB. HOMESTYLE BURGERS." Each box bears a use by date of "06/22/08."
- 8-pound boxes of "TOPPS 100% PURE GROUND BEEF HAMBURGERS, 32 QUARTER POUNDS." Each box bears a use by date of "06/12/08," "06/18/08" or "06/22/08."
- 3-pound bags of "SAM'S CHOICE BACKYARD GOURMET BEEF BURGERS, 80/20, 12 QUARTER POUND ROUND PATTIES." Each bag bears a use by date of "03/08/08."
- 3-pound boxes of "TOPPS 100% PURE GROUND BEEF HAMBURGERS, 12 QUARTER POUNDS." Each box bears a use by date of "06/18/08."

Each package also bears the establishment number "Est. 5712." The frozen ground beef products were produced on June 12, June 18 and June 22, 2007, and were distributed to **retail establishments nationwide**.

For best quality, FSIS recommends consumers use any frozen ground beef products within three to four months of the stated use by date. It is important that consumers look for the recalled products and return them if found in their freezers.

The problem was discovered through an investigation into illness reported to the FSIS Consumer Complaint Monitoring System (CCMS). While the investigation is ongoing, J & B Meats is voluntarily recalling the products based on a preliminary analysis of epidemiological data. Anyone concerned about an illness should contact a physician.

Consumers and media with questions about the recall should call the company's recall line at (888) 734-0451.

E. coli O157:H7 is a potentially deadly bacterium that can cause bloody diarrhea and dehydration. The

very young, seniors and persons with compromised immune systems are the most susceptible to foodborne illness.

Consumers with food safety questions can "Ask Karen," the FSIS virtual representative available 24 hours a day at AskKaren.gov. The toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHotline (1-888-674-6854) is available in English and Spanish and can be reached from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Friday. Recorded food safety messages are available 24 hours a day.





Preparing Ground Beef for Safe Consumption

USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline 1-888-MPHOTLINE or visit www.fsis.usda.gov

Although the product(s) being recalled should be returned to the point of purchase, consumers preparing other ground beef products should heed the following advice.

Consumers should only eat ground beef patties that have been cooked to a safe temperature of 160 °F. When a ground beef patty is cooked to 160 °F throughout, it can be safe and juicy, regardless of color.

The only way to be sure a ground beef patty is cooked to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria is to use an accurate food thermometer.

Color is not a reliable indicator that ground beef patties have been cooked to a temperature high enough to kill harmful bacteria such as *E. coli* O157:H7.

Eating a pink or red ground beef patty without first verifying that the safe temperature of 160 °F has been reached is a significant risk factor for foodborne illness.

Thermometer use to ensure proper cooking temperature is especially important for those who cook or serve ground beef patties to people most at risk for foodborne illness because *E. coli* O157:H7 can lead to serious illness or even death. Those most at risk include young children, seniors, and those with compromised immune systems.